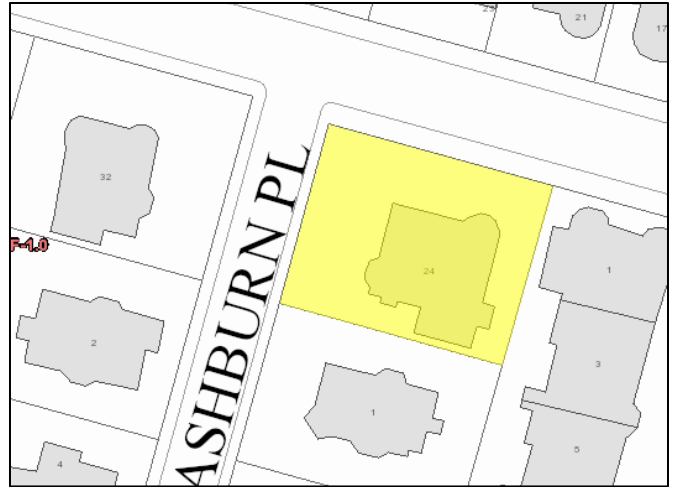


Brookline Preservation Commission

Demolition Application Report

Address: 24 Auburn Street
Applicant: 24 Auburn Development LLC
Building Type: House (Full)
National Register Listing (if Applicable): None



Historical/Architectural Significance:

24 Auburn Street was built by 1900, a 2 ½ story asymmetrical Colonial Revival home. A Queen Anne inspired curved 2 story bay fills the left third of the façade, aligned to the corner of the center entry porch. Pilasters, slender double columns and the wide entablature of the porch frame the center entry door, which is flanked by two leaded glass windows. Pilasters are found at the corners of the façade as well, running from the water table to the elaborate cornice featuring decorative brackets and dentils. The majority of the windows in the home are 1/1, with a few diamond pane sash on the side elevations. At the first floor façade, the windows have entablatures; a bay window is located to the rear of the right elevation. The hipped asphalt roof has two small gabled dormers on the front and left sides, one each on the right and rear sides. A hipped roof ell extends to the rear of the home.

The subdivision of the Auburn Street neighborhood coincided with the opening of the West End Electric Railway on Beacon Street in 1888. While mansions and apartment blocks were typical in the immediate vicinity of the streetcar line, Auburn Street's location several blocks back from Beacon Street attracted smaller scale development. Modest, single family homes lined the street by the mid 1890's, creating a residential character that persists today. Though the street is immediately adjacent to commercial development on Harvard Street, many homes from the 1880's and 90's remain on Auburn Street, exhibiting a range of well-preserved Queen Anne, Shingle and Colonial Revival designs popular at the time.

24 Auburn Street was built slightly after the initial subdivision of the neighborhood, located on one of the lots created by the last vacant lot subdivision on the street, land formerly owned by E.C. Willson. Though no building permit could be located, it was likely built by Cyrus Washburn, the builder and developer who purchased the land, creating the road at

Washburn Place. The land was divided into 6 parcels off this new road; in 1900 4 were built, three of these still owned by Cyrus Washburn. The 1900 atlas shows the last of these homes, 24 Auburn Street, owned by Mary S. Ryan.

Cyrus Washburn was a highly successful developer based in Weymouth. When Weymouth Iron Works greatly increased the demand for housing in the town, Washburn bought acres of pasture land and laid out Shawmut, Washburn & Lake Streets in Weymouth. By 1855 he had constructed homes on these streets, at one time owning over 100 homes in Weymouth alone. In this development he is said to have built most of the homes from 2nd hand materials salvaged from homes he tore down in Boston. He made his fortune from this construction in just a few years and became the heaviest taxpayer in town. In 1897, he donated \$10,000 to his hometown East Bridgewater for the construction of the Town's first public library.

By 1925 the home was owned by Margaret and Albert Wood. The couple used their residence as a lodging house from 1925 to 1942. Though their lodging house applications consistently claimed they housed 7 lodgers, census records in 1930 showed 12 lodgers at their address, all female. The next owners continued the lodging house use, operating it as such from 1943 to at least 1958. The Shapiros made a few changes to the home during their ownership, mostly for code reasons due to the lodging house use. In 1958 a straight iron ladder on the exterior was replaced by a staircase for egress and a sprinkler system was installed.

The house at 24 Auburn Street meets the following criteria for an initial determination of significance:

c. The building is associated with one or more significant historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, cultural, political, economic, or social history of the town or Commonwealth; and

d. The building is historically or architecturally significant in terms of its period, style, method of construction, or its association with a significant architect or builder, either by itself or as part of a group of buildings.

The building at 24 Auburn Street retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials, and workmanship.



Aerial view of 24 Auburn Street, looking east.



Aerial view of 24 Auburn Street, looking north.



Aerial view of 24 Auburn Street, looking west.

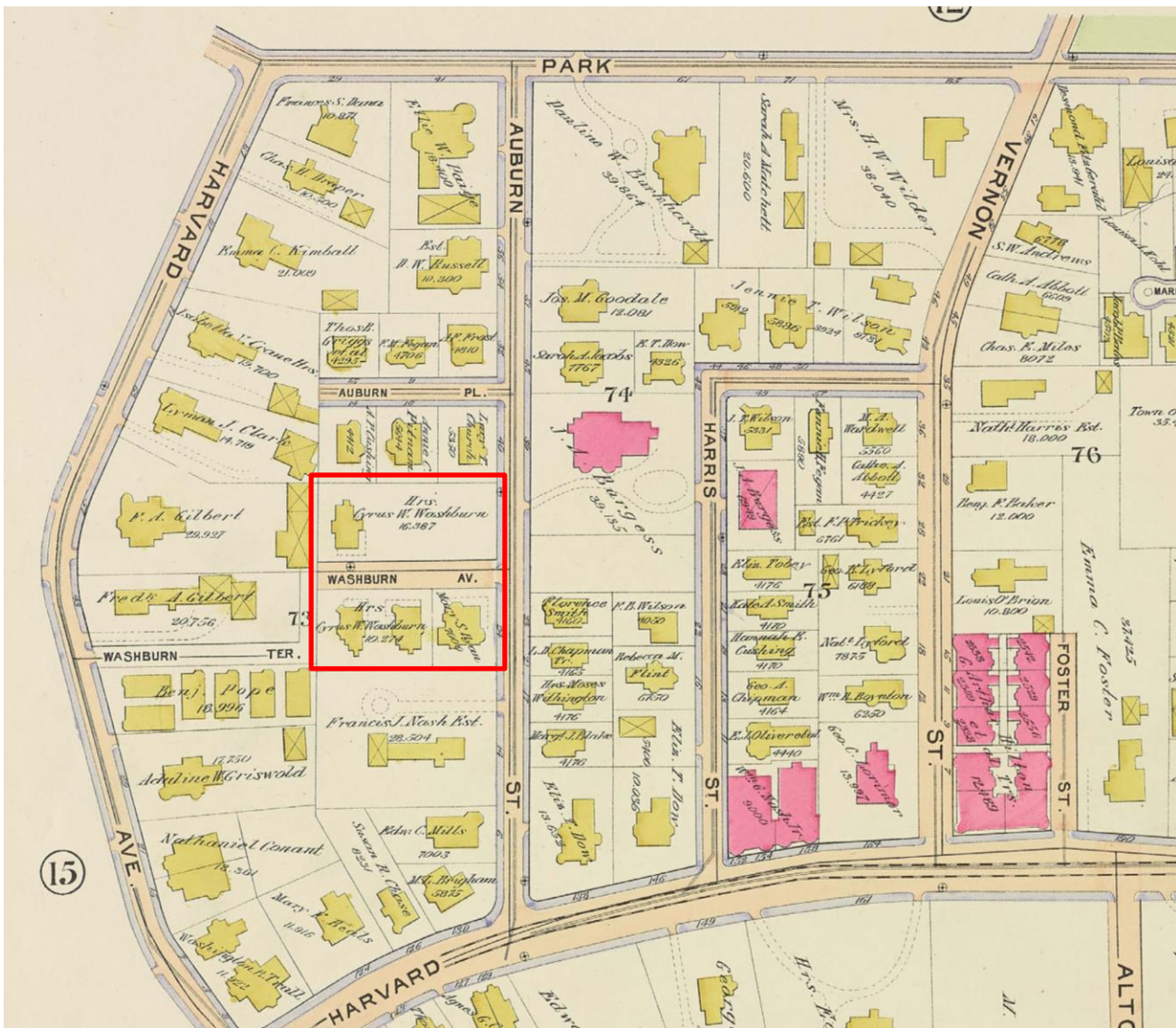


Aerial view of 24 Auburn Street, looking south.









1900 Brookline Town Atlas, showing the Vernon-Harris neighborhood in 1900. The outline marks the property purchased and subdivided by the heirs of Cyrus Washburn; Mary S. Ryan owns 24 Auburn, the first of the homes to be sold.